

The Old Paths

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“My Mother And My Brethren”

Jarrod Jacobs

In Matthew 12, our Lord stood before the people and taught great things to them. As He was teaching, one said,

“Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother” (Matt. 12:47-50). What was Jesus saying? Did He mean that He did not know His mother and brethren? Of course, not. He was making a point that would be indelibly marked on the peoples’ hearts from this time forward. What was He saying?

Spiritual Relationships Are More Important Than Earthly Relationships.

Though Christ loved His mother, half-brothers and half-sisters, He knew their acceptance was not as important as the acceptance of God. Jesus taught on one occasion: *“I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man’s foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me”* (Matt. 10:35-37). Though Christ’s fami-

ly wished to speak with Him, the people needed to know that earthly relationships paled in comparison to being in the right relationship with God! So do we!

The apostle Paul understood this and said that his family lineage and ancestry could give him reasons for boasting. However, he said, *“But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ”* (Phil. 3:7-8). He was a “Hebrew of the Hebrews,” but earthly ties and relationships meant nothing to him if it meant losing his eternal home (Phil. 3:13-14). Do we consider our eternal home more important than anything else? Think about it!

Man’s Obedience To Christ Means He Can Enjoy God’s Blessings.

The apostle Paul taught this when he wrote the Romans. He told them, *“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together”* (Rom. 8:16-17). How do we become children of God? By being born again (Jn. 3:3, 5)! This spiritual birth takes place after one has believed in Christ, repented of his sins, confessed Christ, and been baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:36-38). Jesus describes it as

being “born of water and the spirit” (Jn. 3:5). It is also compared to our Lord’s death, burial, and resurrection (Rom. 6:3-4, 16-18). The book of Acts records those who followed this plan (Jews, Acts 2; Eunuch, Acts 8; Paul, Acts 22:16; Corinthians, Acts 18). When we do as the Lord says, we become spiritual heirs of the promise (I Pet. 1:4). Christ has promised “where I am, there ye may be also” (Jn. 14:1-3). How can we place anything before the Lord and His blessings? Christ taught on this occasion (Matt. 12:48-50) that nothing should come before the Lord!

Not Everyone Is In God’s Family.

Notice that when Jesus said certain ones were His “brother, and sister, and mother,” it was those who “shall do the will of my Father.” What of those who do not do the will of the Father? They have no relationship with Him! Jesus made it clear that “not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven” (Matt. 7:21). Therefore, doing the will of the Father is required for going to Heaven, as well as for being a brother or sister of Christ. This is why we do not call just anyone “brother” or “sister” in that spiritual sense. Though they may claim such, not everyone is Christ’s brother and sister (II Jn. 9-11). Christ’s “brother” and “sister,” those that will see Heaven, are those who faithfully live according to the will of the Father!

Conclusion

Are you in the family of God? Can Christ call you “brother” or “sister”? If not, do not delay from becoming a Christian while you still have the time and opportunity to do so (Mk. 16:16).

Who Is God?

Aric Russell

In Genesis 1, we learn that God created all that we know, including ourselves. However, do we really understand who God is? Perhaps this is more difficult than we would think. Can we truly understand a being who can create an entire universe in just six days? We may not be able to understand everything about God, but we can learn who God is.

There are a number of verses to show that God is composed of three beings. When a person is baptized, he is baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19). During Jesus' baptism as recorded in Matthew 3:16-17, we can see all three. Jesus is coming up out of the water; He is the Son. God, the Father, speaks from Heaven. Meanwhile the Holy Spirit is coming down from Heaven in a form like a dove.

The Father is God. In teaching us to pray, Jesus address His prayer to "our Father, who is in heaven." James 3:9 talks about God, even the Father. In Isaiah 64:8, we read about the Lord who is our Father. This brings up one of the confusions when talking about God. Sometimes the word "God" is used in reference to all three persons acting as one. At other times, "God" refers to a specific being in the Godhead, such as the Father. As a result, the Father and the Godhead are inseparable.

In addition, Jesus, the Son, is also God. In John 1:1 and 14, John talks about Jesus coming to earth in a human form. Jesus is called the Word and the Word is God. Often in the Bible, Jesus is called the Son of God. If someone is a son, then they are also of the same family. We see then that Jesus is a part of deity by the various names He is given. In Matthew 1:23, Jesus is called Immanuel, which means, "God with us." In Isaiah 9:6, there is a long list of names for the coming Messiah, whom we know as Jesus. Among those names are "mighty God" and "everlasting Father." If none of these verses convince you, Paul makes a very clear statement in Romans 9:5 when he calls Jesus, "God blessed forever."

The Holy Spirit, too, is God. In Genesis 1:2, He is referred to as the Spirit of God. He resides in Heaven. Jesus told His disciples that He would return to Heaven and send the Spirit (Jn. 16:7-8). The Spirit is also eternal, just as the Father and Son are eternal (Heb. 9:14). In I Peter 3:18, we are told that Jesus was resurrected by the power of the Spirit, but in Acts 2:24, Peter says that it was God who raised

Jesus. Peter is not contradicting himself. The Holy Spirit is God.

There is one God (the Father), one Lord (the Son), and one Spirit (the Holy Spirit) in whom we believe (Eph. 4:4-6).

It is difficult to describe our Creator. His vastness and great power defies the thoughts of man. No, we cannot fully understand Him, but we can fully trust Him.

"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16).

Are you praying daily for our work here at Caneyville? Are you constantly asking for God's blessings on our elders, deacons, preachers, Bible class teachers, our elderly, the widows, the spiritually weak, and every brother and sister in Christ? We have a great and powerful tool in prayer. Use it!

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